

24 February 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Document Division
THRU : Acting Chief, Analysis Branch
SUBJECT : Document Control Files

Problem

To determine a practical method of achieving uniform document processing files and to develop simplified procedural instructions for all personnel engaged in processing operations.

Facts Bearing on the Problem

1. The volume and variety of documents received in Selection is so great that an extensively cross referenced card file is necessary to determine appropriate processing procedures. ✓
2. Such a file does not exist. Present working files are dispersed and are inadequate for determining correct processing procedures.
3. The present Selection file covers only a small fraction of the material and must be laboriously built up as items are received.
4. Portions of this file are duplicated in other sections. These files are used for different purposes in:
 - a. the Mail Room
 - b. Batching
 - c. Dissemination (State, Defense, Special)
 - d. Standard Distribution
 - e. Selection
5. Cards in different files have been found to be inconsistent
6. There is no real control over the development of document processing procedures.

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Discussion

1. Experience has proven that correct processing decisions cannot be made at the Selection point without reference to a complete and extensively cross referenced procedure file. The Selection Section inherited a skeleton file from the former Screening Operation. This has not been adequate and Selection personnel have had to rely on files available at other processing points. Conversely personnel from these sections use available references from Selection when their own files are incomplete.
2. Additions to the Selection files are made as quickly as the correct processing procedure is determined either from other files or after consulting with personnel of other sections. This is time consuming, inefficient, and imposes an additional workload on the section which detracts from the accomplishment of its assigned mission.
3. A master reference file covering all processing procedures is needed and could be completed quickly if time were budgeted to incorporate entries from all files now maintained at various processing points. Document handling instructions are needed at all processing points. Reproduction of complete copies of the master file is neither necessary nor desirable and would amount to useless duplication. A machine listout of all entries in such a master file would provide adequate processing instructions, is easily corrected, and can be reproduced as necessary. Used as a simplified guide to document processing and keyed to the master file it would eliminate time consuming cross checking of files.
4. The building of a master file and the printing of a machine listout would not completely eliminate duplication since specialized files would still be necessary for Standard Distribution and Dissemination. A machine listout however would suffice for Selection, Batching, and the Mail Room.
5. Coordination of document control and file development could be achieved as a by product of a machine listout thus eliminating duplicate effort spent in building files and eliminating inconsistencies resulting from the present approach.
6. The usefulness of any file depends in large measure on the accessibility of entries. If a file can be used only by the person who established it, its future use by replacement personnel is limited. A uniform system of file entries is indicated. Uniformity of card format would also facilitate the use of established files.

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Conclusions

A master file, certain specialized files, and uniform file entries are necessary to adequate document processing. Uniform card format for file entries would facilitate the use of files. A machine listout of all file entries keyed to existing files and the master file would provide simplified processing instructions for daily use and serve as an effective control on the development of processing procedures.

Recommendations

1. That a master procedure file be established
 2. That a uniform system for file entries be adopted
 3. That a uniform card format for these entries be adopted
 4. That a machine listout of file entries keyed to all files, and including simplified processing instructions be developed and provided to all processing points as a working tool.
 5. That a central processing point be established for controlling new entries to the listout and to the master file.
- Manual file ok ✓*
No.


Analysis Branch

STATINTL

Attachment: A suggested list of items for machine listout.

Attachment

Suggested entries for machine listout of processing procedures.

1. Primary source
2. Secondary source
3. Series title and series identification numbers
4. Disposition by Mail Room
 - a. Selection
 - b. Batching
 - c. Standard
 - d. Direct Dist.
 - e. IPI
5. Disposition by Selection
 - a. Code or Nodex
 - b. Ig/So
 - c. IPI
 - d. Direct Dissemination etc.
6. Disposition by batching (type of batch)
 - a. Nodex M
 - b. Special Nodex M
 - c. V batch
 - d. X batch etc.
7. Other information to be determined